

Re: 05-311
FCC Personnel,

I am writing to express my grave concern about the potential of telecommunication companies to disregard the public interest if “video franchising” rules are removed. Considering that the telecoms are given free access to the publicly owned airwaves, they should have a responsibility to allow for programming that is in the best interest of the public. It would be a travesty to allow the big telecoms to run roughshod over the public interest by eliminating the rules which help to make public/educational/governmental (PEG) TV viable. If anything, the FCC should be committed to increasing access to PEG TV rather than reducing it. While the big telecoms may complain that these rules pose an unreasonable hurdle to entering the “video service” business, this argument is nonsense. The government should not be in the business of slightly increasing the profits of an already hugely profitable industry (if they actually increase at all) on the backs of the public interest.

In addition, consider that the noncommercial PEG TV channels, in most markets, deliver more original locally-made shows than all the commercial television stations combined. Thus, they provide local information that the big networks do not. In addition PEG and local public access centers are generally the only means by which individuals and non-profit organizations affordably utilize the tools and training to produce their own programming and to express their own ideas through the media.

Democracy works best when a very diverse range of ideas and opinions are promulgated through the media. Given that PEG TV produces such a wide range of ideas unavailable through other outlets, it is the responsibility of the FCC to ensure that PEG TV continues to provide a viable alternative to the corporate media.

Respectfully,

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